

# How to Apply For Unemployment



**On-Line**

**By Phone**



State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development  
Unemployment Insurance  
Bureau of Benefit Operations  
PO Box 7905, Madison WI 53707

Email: [benopnet@dwd.state.wi.us](mailto:benopnet@dwd.state.wi.us)  
Internet: [www.dwd.state.wi.us/uiiben](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/uiiben)

DWD is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. If you have a disability and need information in an alternate format or need it translated to another language, please call 608/267-8997 or TTY 888/393-8914.

## HOOURS OF OPERATION AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

### TO FILE AN INITIAL CLAIM APPLICATION FOR A NEW CLAIM OR TO REOPEN AN EXISTING CLAIM:

On-line: [www.ucclaim-wi.org](http://www.ucclaim-wi.org)

#### By Telephone:

Madison Area ..... 608/232-0678  
Milwaukee ..... 414/438-7700  
Toll Free Number ..... 1-800/UC CLAIM  
(1-800/822-5246)

#### Claims Specialists are available:

Monday-Friday 7:45 AM - 4:30 PM

#### Internet and automated telephone initial claims systems are available:

Sunday ..... 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
Monday-Friday ..... 6:00 AM - 7:00 PM  
Saturday ..... 9:00 AM - 2:30 PM

### TO FILE A WEEKLY CLAIM CERTIFICATION FOR A BENEFIT CHECK:

Madison Area ..... 608/261-9990  
Milwaukee Area ..... 414/438-5395  
Toll Free Number ..... 1-800/978-7887

Sunday ..... 9:00 AM - Midnight  
Monday-Friday ..... 1:00 AM - Midnight  
Saturday ..... 1:00 AM - 3:00 PM

### TO GET INFORMATION, ASSISTANCE OR TO TALK TO A CLAIMS SPECIALIST:

Madison Area ..... 608/232-0824  
Milwaukee Area ..... 414/438-7713  
Toll Free Number ..... 1-800/494-4944

#### Claims Specialists are available:

Monday-Friday ..... 7:45 AM - 4:30 PM

#### Automated Inquiry system is available:

Sunday ..... 9:00 AM - Midnight  
Monday-Friday ..... 1:00 AM - Midnight  
Saturday ..... 1:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Deaf, hard-of-hearing, and speech-impaired callers may apply on-line using the Internet address shown above, or they may apply by calling our TTY toll free number. TTY callers must have a telephone typewriter device. Voice calls are not answered on this number.

TTY Toll Free Number: 1-888/393-8914

## To Apply for Benefits

An application must be made each time you want to start receiving benefits. All claims based on work done in Wisconsin are filed either on the Internet or by telephone, even if you now live in another state.

### To complete your application you will need:

- ☐ Your Social Security Number.
- ☐ A Personal Identification Number (PIN). Your PIN is a 4-digit number you make up before you apply and it helps to identify you. The same PIN must be used for all on-line and telephone unemployment services. Choose a PIN you will remember. If you forget your PIN or want to change it, call one of the initial claim application telephone numbers on the next page and press 4.

#### Do not tell your PIN to anyone!

- ☐ Your Wisconsin Driver's License Number, if you have one.
- ☐ The names of everyone for whom you worked in the past 18 months. For each employer you will also need a full address (including zip code), a telephone number, the reason you are no longer working there, and your first and last dates of work.
- ☐ Your Alien Registration Number, if you are not a U.S. citizen.
- ☐ The name and local number of your union hall, if you are a union member.

**Remember...** Your claim begins the week you apply or reapply. To avoid any loss of benefits, apply the first week you are unemployed. Do not wait until the week is over!

**Apply on-line at:** [www.ucclaim-wi.org](http://www.ucclaim-wi.org)

### Apply by telephone using a touch-tone phone:

Madison ..... 608/232-0678  
Milwaukee ..... 414/438-7700  
Toll Free ..... 1-800/822-5246  
TTY (toll free) ..... 1-888/393-8914  
(for deaf, hard-of-hearing and speech-impaired callers)

A recorded voice will answer your call. The voice will ask you questions and tell you what numbers to press to give your answers.

You must press 1 to apply for benefits. After you have answered all the questions, one of our staff will help you finish.

### Apply during these times:

- Applications can be started:  
Sunday ..... 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
Monday-Friday ..... 6:00 AM - 7:00 PM  
Saturday ..... 9:00 AM - 2:30 PM
- Claims Specialists are available:  
Monday-Friday ..... 7:45 AM - 4:30 PM

### Use the same Internet address or telephone numbers to reapply:

You must reapply:

- Each time you stop filing for weekly benefits and want to begin again.
- When you wait too long (more than 14 days) to file a claim for a weekly benefit check for any week and the system tells you there are no weeks to claim.

### Why we need your Social Security number:

The federal Social Security Act requires you to give us your social security number. It will be used to verify your identity and to determine your eligibility. If you do not provide your social security number, we cannot take your claim.

### No touch-tone phone line?

If you do not have a touch-tone telephone line but you do have a touch-tone telephone with a "tone-to-pulse" switch, set the switch to "pulse" before you call. As soon as your call is answered, change the switch to "tone" to complete your call. If you must use a rotary phone, dial the number and one of our staff will help you.

### Have a question? Need help?

Call between 7:45 AM and 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday to speak to one of our staff:

Madison ..... 608/232-0824  
Milwaukee ..... 414/438-7713  
Toll Free ..... 1-800/494-4944

Recorded information about claiming benefits is available during these hours:

Sunday ..... 9:00 AM - Midnight  
Monday-Friday ..... 1:00 AM - Midnight  
Saturday ..... 1:00 AM - 3:00 PM

### For faster service:

Our telephone lines for applications and information are very busy on Monday. Call Tuesday through Friday between 8:30 AM and 11:30 AM or between 1:30 PM and 4:00 PM.

**After you file your new application:**

- You will receive a claim confirmation form and a handbook in the mail.
- If you qualify for unemployment benefits, we will send you a notice telling you the amount of benefits you can receive.
- If you do not qualify for unemployment benefits, we will send you a notice that tells you why.

**Filing weekly claims for a benefit check:**

You must call every week to file for a benefit check. An unemployment week starts on Sunday and ends on Saturday. Call **after** the week is over. A recorded voice will answer your call.

Madison ..... 608/261-9990  
Milwaukee ..... 414/438-5395  
Toll Free ..... 1-800/978-7887

Sunday ..... 9:00 AM - Midnight  
Monday-Friday ..... 1:00 AM - Midnight  
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**When can you expect your first check?**

The first check for most claims is paid within 2 weeks of the week you apply.

**Qualifying for benefits:****Base Period**

The wages paid during your base period are used to determine if you qualify for UI benefits and how much you can be paid if you do qualify. Your base period is the first four of the last five completed calendar quarters before you file your initial claim application. If you do not have enough wages to qualify using this base period, we will use the four most recently completed quarters as your base period.

**Weekly Benefit Rate**

Your weekly benefit rate is equal to 4% of the wages paid during the quarter in your base period with the highest wages. The lowest weekly benefit rate is \$49 and the highest weekly benefit rate is \$329.

**Qualifying Wages**

You must have been paid wages from covered employment in at least two quarters of your base period. You need:

- A total of at least \$1,470 in the 4 quarters of your base period;
- At least \$1,225 in the base period quarter with the highest earnings;
- A total of at least \$196 in the 3 base period quarters with the lowest earnings; and
- If you were paid benefits in a prior benefit year which has ended, you must have worked since the beginning of that benefit year and earned at least 8 times the weekly benefit rate of that claim.

**Maximum Benefit Amount**

The total amount of benefits you can be paid during your 52-week benefit year is called your maximum benefit amount and is equal to:

- 26 times your weekly benefit rate; or
- 40% of your total covered base period wages, **whichever is less.**

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